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EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE
HIGH COMMISSIONER'S PROGRAMME

Forty-eighth session

REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE

I. INTRODUCTION

1. At its forty-seventh session in October 1996, the Executive Committee adopted a decision on the programme of work of the Standing Committee in 1997 (A/AC.96/878, para. 27) in which it set out the issues to be examined by the Standing Committee.

2. In accordance with Executive Committee Working Methods adopted at the forty-sixth session (A/AC.96/860, para. 32), the Standing Committee held four meetings in the course of 1997: in January, April/May, June and September/October 1997. A planning meeting of Executive Committee members in December 1996 established the calendar of meetings and determined the distribution of the different agenda items (see Annex I).

3. A detailed account of the work undertaken at each of the meetings of the Standing Committee is contained in the following reports: A/AC.96/879: *Report of the Fifth Meeting of the Standing Committee (11 December 1996)*; A/AC.96/880: *Report of the Sixth Meeting of the Standing Committee (30-31 January 1997)*; A/AC.96/881: *Report of the Seventh Meeting of the Standing Committee (30 April-1 May 1997)*; A/AC.96/888: *Report of the Eighth Meeting of the Standing Committee (24-26 June 1997)*; A/AC.96/894: *Report of the Ninth Meeting of the Standing Committee (9-10 September and 8 October 1997)*.

Issues covered by the Standing Committee in 1997

4. The work undertaken by the Standing Committee included a number of recurrent items. As foreseen in the Decision on Budget Structure and Governance (A/AC.96/860, para. 22(1)), in-depth reviews of UNHCR programmes

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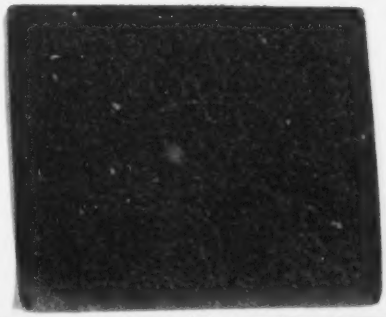

and activities in different regions were conducted at each of the meetings, allowing the Standing Committee to oversee more effectively the evolution of General and Special Programmes in the areas concerned. Central Asia, South West Asia, North Africa and the Middle East were reviewed in January; Europe and former Yugoslavia in April/May; Africa in June; and the Americas, and Asia and the Pacific in September.

5. In addition, the Standing Committee considered at each of its meetings regular updates on overall programme and funding issues, through which it kept abreast of the situation in terms of General and Special Programme budgets, funding, and allocations made from the various criteria funds (programme reserve, emergency fund and voluntary repatriation fund).

6. At its various meetings, the Standing Committee also reviewed programme policy issues. In January it examined the impact of refugees on the environment, and the economic and social impact of large refugee populations on host developing countries. In April/May, it reviewed UNHCR's efforts in respect to refugee children, including UNHCR's strategy for follow-up to the report on the impact of armed conflict on children, and in September it looked at developments within UNHCR in respect to refugee women, refugee health and nutrition, and the newly reissued Resettlement Handbook.

7. In accordance with Executive Committee Working Methods (A/AC.96/865, para. 32(d)), the June meeting of the Standing Committee focused particularly on questions of international protection. Two days were devoted to consideration of the Note on International Protection (A/AC.96/882), which focused on the institution of asylum and a number of other issues stemming from the conclusions on international protection adopted at the forty-seventh session, including admission, *non-refoulement*, the civilian nature of refugee camps and the physical security of refugees and others of concern. It also examined how asylum responds to contemporary protection needs and how it can be strengthened. In addition, issues relating to statelessness, the application of the exclusion and cessation clauses, and the return of persons not in need of international protection were reviewed, as were progress reports on informal consultations on international protection for all who need it and activities for refugee law promotion, dissemination and training were reviewed. Conclusions resulting from the Standing Committee's consideration of these protection issues are being submitted to the forty-eighth session for adoption.

8. Several coordination issues, including further follow-up to ECOSOC resolution 1995/56 on the strengthening of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations, were considered during the year. In addition, in September, updates on the use of memoranda of understanding as mechanisms of coordination and on the Partnership in Action (PARinAC) process, whereby UNHCR endeavours to strengthen its relations with NGOs, were reviewed.

9. In terms of issues of oversight identified by the Executive Committee, in January the Standing Committee examined UNHCR's internal audit function, in April/May it looked at information systems and programming issues, and in September it reviewed issues relating to implementing partners, including audit certification, training and performance evaluation. The Standing Committee also examined other issues of evaluation; notably, it considered an evaluation of UNHCR's response to the Rwanda emergency in June and in September it looked at staff stress and security, as well as the

implementation of policy and guidelines on refugee children. Planned evaluation activities in 1997 were also reviewed by the Standing Committee in January.

10. The question of enhanced NGO observer participation in the Standing Committee was also addressed. Following a series of informal consultations chaired by the Vice-Chairman of the Executive Committee, the Standing Committee adopted a decision in June establishing criteria for enhanced NGO participation. In line with Executive Committee working methods, the Standing Committee also undertook the selection of the annual theme for the forty-eighth session of the Executive Committee during its two sessions in April/May and June, adopting the theme of "repatriation challenges".

11. With regard to management and administrative matters, the Standing Committee was kept regularly apprised, by means of written and oral reports, of progress made in UNHCR's change management process, Project Delphi.

12. The Standing Committee also undertook a preliminary review, in the light of the Report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) (A/AC.96/884/Add.3), of the budgetary and financial documentation being presented to the forty-eighth session of the Executive Committee.

Standing Committee decisions

13. In accordance with the authority vested in it by the Executive Committee, the Standing Committee adopted a number of decisions on matters included in its programme of work. The texts of these decisions are annexed to the reports of the different Standing Committee meetings, as follows:

A/AC.96/879: *Report of the Fifth Meeting of the Standing Committee (11 December 1996)*

- Decision on Rental of UNHCR's Headquarters Premises at Montbrillant

A/AC.96/880: *Report of the Sixth Meeting of the Standing Committee (30-31 January 1997)*

- Decision on programme and funding projections

A/AC.96/881: *Report of the Seventh Meeting of the Standing Committee (30 April - 1 May 1997)*

- Decision on the Social and Economic Impact of Large Refugee Populations on Host Developing Countries
- Decision on programme and funding projections
- Decision on the Implementation Plan for Project Delphi

A/AC.96/888: *Report of the Eighth Meeting of the Standing Committee (24-26 June 1997)*

- Decision on programme and funding projections
- Decision on the Annual Theme of the Forty-eighth Session of the Executive Committee

- Decision on Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) Observer Participation in the Work of the Executive Committee of the High Commissioner's Programme and its Standing Committee

Plenary decisions: preparation of drafts by the Standing Committee

14. On the basis of discussions undertaken in the course of the year, and in accordance with the Executive Committee's working methods, the Standing Committee initiated the preparation of draft decisions and conclusions for submission to the forty-eighth session of the Executive Committee. In a series of informal consultations under the chairmanship of the Rapporteur, the following draft decision and conclusions have been discussed;

- General Conclusion on International Protection (item 5[1])
- Conclusion on Safeguarding Asylum (item 5)
- Conclusion on Safety of UNHCR Staff and Humanitarian Personnel (item 5)
- Conclusion on Refugee Children and Adolescents (item 5)
- Conclusion on Follow-up to the CIS Conference (item 5)
- General Decision on Programme, Administrative and Financial Matters (item 6/7)
- Decision on Programme of Work of the Standing Committee in 1998 (item 8)
- Decision on Observer Participation in 1997-1998 (item 9)
- Decision on the Provisional Agenda of the Forty-Ninth Session (item 9)

[1] Numbers refer to items on the agenda of the forty-eighth session of the Executive Committee.

CALENDER

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE STANDING COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME FOR 1997

	6th Meeting 30 -31 (a.m) January	7th Meeting 30 April - 1 May	8th Meeting 24 - 26 June	9th Meeting 9 - 10 September
PROGRAMME AND FUNDING MATTERS	• Update on programmes and funding	• Update on programmes and funding	• Update on programmes and funding	
SITUATION REPORTS	• CASWANAME • Other important developments	• Europe and the former Yugoslavia • Other important developments	• Africa • Follow-up to CIS Conference • Other important developments	• Americas and Asia • Other important developments
PROTECTION AND PROGRAMME POLICY ISSUES	• Refugees and the environment • Economic and social impact of large refugee populations on host developing countries	• Refugee children, including UNHCR's strategy for follow-up to the report on the impact of armed conflict on children	• Note on International Protection • Statelessness • Update on the informal consultations on international protection for all who need it • UNHCR's activities for refugee law promotion, dissemination and training • Return of persons not in need of international protection • Exclusion clauses • Cessation clauses	• Refugee women framework for implementation of the Beijing Plan of Action • Refugee health and nutrition • Information note on Resettlement Handbook
COORDINATION ISSUES	• Follow-up to ECOSOC resolution 1995/56 (report by DHA/UNHCR)	• Follow-up to ECOSOC resolution 1995/56 (report by DHA/UNHCR, preview of report to ECOSOC)		• Memoranda of Understanding as a mechanism of coordination • PARinAC

	6th Meeting 30 -31 (a.m) January	7th Meeting 30 April - 1 May	8th Meeting 24 - 26 June	9th Meeting 9 - 10 September
REPORTS RELATING TO OVERSIGHT	• Internal audit • Follow-up of the evaluation of UNHCR's response to the Rwanda Emergency • Planned evaluation activities in 1997	• Information systems and IMIS • Programming (budgets, management and control) and financial (statements) issues	• Procurement	• Implementing partners (audit certification, training and performance evaluation) • Evaluation of staff stress and security • Evaluation of the implementation of policy and guidelines on refugee children • Inspection and evaluation activities • Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) Report
GOVERNANCE ISSUES		• Annual theme for the forty-eighth session of the Executive Committee • Review of Executive Committee Working Methods, including observer participation	• Selection of annual theme for the forty-eighth session of the Executive Committee • Review of Executive Committee Working Methods, including observer participation	
MANAGEMENT ISSUES	• Update on Project Delphi	• Preliminary review of UNHCR's accounts for 1996 • Project Delphi: financial implications	• Progress report on Project Delphi	

	Resumed Session 8 October
PROGRAMME AND FUNDING MATTERS	• Overview of UNHCR activities including addenda on expenditure, review of budgetary and post requirements, update on programme and funding, report of the ACABQ; donor contributions • Programme delivery and administrative support costs
FINANCIAL MATTERS	• Voluntary funds administered by the High Commissioner: Accounts for the year 1996 • Report of the Board of Auditors to the General Assembly on the Accounts of the Voluntary Funds administered by UNHCR for the period ended December 1996 • Measures taken or proposed in response to the recommendations in the Report of the Board of Auditors
MANAGEMENT ISSUES	• Update on Project Delphi

Forty-Eighth Session of the Executive Committee 13 - 17 October

STANDING COMMITTEE DOCUMENTATION ISSUED DURING 1997

5th Meeting (11 December 1996)

EC/47/SC/CRP.1	Montbrillant Building: Rental Costs
EC/47/SC/CRP.2	Annotated Agenda

6th Meeting (30 - 31 January 1997)

EC/47/SC/CRP.3/Rev.1	Agenda
EC/47/SC/CRP.4	Draft Report of the Fifth Meeting of the Standing Committee
EC/47/SC/CRP.5	Overall Programme and Funding Projections for 1996 and 1997
EC/47/SC/CRP.6 and Corr.1 and Corr.2	Update on Regional Developments in Central Asia, South West Asia, North Africa and the Middle East
EC/47/SC/CRP.7 and Corr.1	Social and Economic Impact of Large Refugee Populations on Host Developing Countries
EC/47/SC/CRP.8	Progress Report: Refugees and the Environment
EC/47/SC/CRP.9	Progress on the Follow-up to ECOSOC Resolution 1995/56
EC/47/SC/CRP.10	Internal Audit
EC/47/SC/CRP.11	Lessons Learnt from the Burundi and Rwanda Emergencies: Conclusions of an Internal Review Process
EC/47/SC/CRP.12	UNHCR's Evaluation Activities for 1997
EC/47/SC/CRP.13	Update on Project Delphi

7th Meeting (30 April - 1st May 1997)

EC/47/SC/CRP.14 and Corr.1 (English and French)	Draft Report of the Sixth Meeting of the Standing Committee
EC/47/SC/CRP.15	Provisional Annotated Agenda
EC/47/SC/CRP.16	Update on Programme and Funding Projections for 1997
EC/47/SC/CRP.17 and Corr.1 (English only) and Corr.2 (English and French)	Update on Regional Developments in Europe
EC/47/SC/CRP.18 and Corr.1 (English and French)	Update on Regional Developments in the former Yugoslavia

EC/47/SC/CRP.19	Progress Report on Refugee Children and Adolescents, including UNHCR's Strategy for Follow-up to the Report on the Impact of Armed Conflict on Children
EC/47/SC/CRP.20	Follow-up to Audit Recommendations on Programme and Financial Issues and the Integrated Management Information System
EC/47/SC/CRP.21	Progress Report on the Informal Consultations on Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) Observer Participation in the Work of the Executive Committee of the High Commissioner's Programme and its Standing Committee
EC/47/SC/CRP.22	Information Note on Income and Expenditure for the Year 1996
EC/47/SC/CRP.23	Update on Project Delphi

8th meeting (24 - 26 June 1997)

EC/47/SC/CRP.24	Draft Report of the Seventh Meeting of the Standing Committee
EC/47/SC/CRP.25	Provisional Annotated Agenda
EC/47/SC/CRP.26	Note on International Protection
EC/47/SC/CRP.27	Progress Report on Informal Consultations on the Provision of International Protection for all who need it
EC/47/SC/CRP.28	Return of persons not in need of International Protection
EC/47/SC/CRP.29	Note on the Exclusion Clauses
EC/47/SC/CRP.30	Note on the Cessation Clauses
EC/47/SC/CRP.31	Note on UNHCR and Statelessness Activities
EC/47/SC/CRP.32	UNHCR's Activities for Refugee Law Promotion, Dissemination and Training
EC/47/SC/CRP.33	Update on International Procurement
EC/47/SC/CRP.34	Update on Programme and Funding Projections for 1997 and Tentative estimates for the 1998 General Programmes Target
EC/47/SC/CRP.35	Follow-up on the Implementation of the Programme of Action of the CIS Conference
EC/47/SC/CRP.36	Update on Developments in the Southern African Region
EC/47/SC/CRP.37	Update on Regional Developments in Central, East and West Africa
EC/47/SC/CRP.38	Update on Developments in the Great Lakes Region

EC/47/SC/CRP.39	Report on the Informal Consultations on Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) Observer Participation in the Work of the Executive Committee of the High Commissioner's Programme and its Standing Committee

9th meeting (9 - 10 September 1997 and 8 October 1997)

EC/47/SC/CRP.40	Draft Report of the Eighth Meeting of the Standing Committee (24-26 June 1997)
EC/47/SC/CRP.41	Provisional Annotated Agenda
EC/47/SC/CRP.42	Execution of Humanitarian Assistance through Implementing Partners : A Joint Inspection Unit Report
EC/47/SC/CRP.43	Update on Regional Developments in the Americas
EC/47/SC/CRP.44	Update on Regional Developments in Asia and the Pacific
EC/47/SC/CRP.45	Progress Report on Refugee Women and UNHCR's Framework for Implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action
EC/47/SC/CRP.46	Refugee Health and Nutrition
EC/47/SC/CRP.47	Information Note on UNHCR's Resettlement Handbook
EC/47/SC/CRP.48	Implementing Partners
EC/47/SC/CRP.49	Staff Stress and Security : A Management Challenge for UNHCR
EC/47/SC/CRP.50	Evaluation of UNHCR's Efforts on Behalf of Children and Adolescents
EC/47/SC/CRP.51	Memoranda of Understanding
EC/47/SC/CRP.52	Report on UNHCR's Relations with Non-Governmental Organizations (PARinAC)
EC/47/SC/CRP.53	Programme Delivery and Administrative Support
EC/47/SC/CRP.54	Update on Project Delphi
EC/47/SC/INF.1	Update on Balances of the Various Reserves Status of Contributions - 1998 Revised Initial Projections for Special Programmes as at 6 October 1997